

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are now pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Editorial changes have been made to claims 1-9 to improve their form and clarity, and new claims 10-13 have been added to further define the present invention. Applicants submit that the editorial changes made to the claims obviate the § 112 rejection. New claims 10-13 read on the embodiment of Figs. 1A, 2A-2C. Independent claim 1 is generic to these embodiments. No matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Only claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Furuta (JP 06-225379). Applicants traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

Claim 1 calls for a sound signal processing unit that divides a sound source into a plurality of frequency bands and divides the speaker array into a corresponding number of reproduction regions to allocate the frequency bands to the divided reproduction regions, respectively. The number of speakers allocated to each of the reproduction regions is different, and the frequency band with a highest passing frequency is allocated to the reproduction region with a smallest number of speakers.

Applicants submit that Furuta does not disclose allocating the speakers as set forth in claim 1. Specifically, Furuta does not disclose (1) allocating a different number of speakers to each of the reproduction regions, and (2) allocating the frequency band with a highest passing frequency to the reproduction region with a smallest number of speakers.

Independent claim 5 calls for a plurality of speaker driving circuits each for driving one of the speakers. Each of the speaker driving circuits has a primary filter that filters sound signals of left and right channels of a stereo sound source or surround sound source. The passing frequency band permitted to pass in each of the primary filter is set to increase from the speakers positioned at opposite end portions of the speaker array to the speaker or speakers positioned at a central portion of the speaker array.

Applicants submit that Furuta also would not have disclosed or taught claim 5, particularly increasing the passing frequency band from the speakers positioned at opposite end portions of the speaker array to the speaker or speakers positioned at a central portion of the speaker array.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 1-13 patentably distinguish over the applied references and are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE

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